

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
 INTERVIEW WITH JAMIE MCINTYRE ON CNN-TV PROGRAM, "DAYBREAK"
 PENTAGON
 OCTOBER 10, 1994

ANDREA ARCENEUX: The U.S. military response to Iraqi troop movements has been swift. CNN military affairs correspondent Jamie McIntyre is with Secretary of Defense William Perry this morning at the Pentagon.

Good morning, Jamie.

JAMIE MCINTYRE: Good morning. That's right; with me is Defense Secretary William Perry. And Mr. Perry, could you update us first on the latest U.S. intelligence about Iraqi troop movements? How many troops? How close to the border are they?

SEC. PERRY: I'll start off by observing that the Iraqis had three divisions in the area for a long time -- an infantry, a mechanized and an armored. Those three divisions have been alerted. That's one of the developments. Secondly, they have moved in a Republican Guard division right up to the border. This is an armored division. And they have a second Republican Guard armored division in process of moving it in.

In addition to that, yesterday we detected activities at a third Republican Guard division, which is in northern Iraq, beginning preparations to move. We assume it's going to be moved in the same general location.

MR. MCINTYRE: So how many troops? How close are they?

SEC. PERRY: They would have, if this whole buildup were completed, they would have close to 80,000 troops near the border with Kuwait.

MR. MCINTYRE: What about U.S. troops? We are seeing a lot of U.S. troop movements as well. How many are on the way to the Persian Gulf now? And ultimately what will the number of U.S. troops be?

SEC. PERRY: I'll start off with the Air Force, first of all. We have committed to this point more than 200 tactical aircraft which will be there by the end of the day today. These are F-15s, F-16s, A-10s and associated support aircraft like AWACS. So we will have a large air fleet there by the end of the day.

In addition to that, we have sent a carrier battle group into the region. It will be there by the end of the day. It will have, all in all, a Navy capacity besides the carrier. It will include four major warships. We'll have the F-14s, F-18s that go with that. We'll have many, many Tomahawk land-attack missiles.

MR. MCINTYRE: But what about ground troops?

SEC. PERRY: Ground troops; there will be -- a total of 28,000 are committed and on the way at this point. And those include the 18,000 Marines, the Marine expeditionary force. The equipment for those Marines is on ships already on their way to Kuwait. As soon as those ships get to the appropriate location, then we will send the Marines from their base in California. We have a Marine amphibious ready group, 2,000 already at Kuwait, and we have the elements of the 24th infantry division -- that's an armored division -- on their way from Fort Stewart. So far we have only committed 8,000 of that infantry division, but in time we may commit the rest of it.

MR. MCINTYRE: So what's the total number we're looking at of U.S. troops?

SEC. PERRY: Twenty-eight thousand ground combat troops either there or on their way. We have alerted two other divisions in addition to that.

MR. MCINTYRE: So we're talking about far more than just 28,000.

SEC. PERRY: If we deploy those other two divisions, yes, indeed.

MR. MCINTYRE: What is Saddam Hussein up to? Will he invade? What's your feeling?

SEC. PERRY: That's an awfully hard call to make, Jamie, trying to read his mind. I don't understand the logic behind what has gotten him to this position. There's no -- you would have thought that the lessons that he had learned from Desert Storm would have been sufficient, and yet he is repeating those same mistakes. The deployment which I described to you is almost identical to the deployment he made back in 1990, before he invaded Kuwait. Therefore, it suggests that that's what he has in mind.

MR. MCINTYRE: Are you determined to avoid mistakes of the past as well, with, for instance, the failure to take out Saddam Hussein last time?

SEC. PERRY: Well, the first difference in our actions this time and the last time is not to wait for an invasion. We have begun the buildup. We're sending troops into Kuwait. We're sending a powerful air force into Saudi Arabia before the invasion, because we would like to deter the invasion. So we want to have the maximum forces present in the theater to provide whatever deterrent --

MR. MCINTYRE: Is a pre-emptive strike a possibility?

SEC. PERRY: I would not either rule it in or rule it out.

MR. MCINTYRE: Let's turn for a moment to the situation in Haiti. You met over the weekend with Raoul Cedras. What can you tell us about his plans?

SEC. PERRY: I did talk with General Cedras and also General Biamby. General Shalikashvili and I met with the two of them on Saturday evening. And they told us, first of all, or General Cedras told us that -- I'm sorry, it was General Duperval, not General Biamby, was the second person we met with. But General Cedras told us that he would step down from office very soon. Subsequently he's announced he's going to step down today, so we expect him to be leaving office today. General Shalikashvili and I discussed with him leaving the country, and he agreed that he would leave the country shortly thereafter. And I would take that to mean a day or two after he steps down.

MR. MCINTYRE: Where will he go?

SEC. PERRY: I'm not free to say that. That's up to him to announce where he plans to go.

MR. MCINTYRE: The United States is involved militarily in Haiti, also in Bosnia; now again in the Persian Gulf. Is the United States stretched too thin? What if, for instance, tensions were to heat up again on the Korean peninsula? Could the United States handle all of those missions?

SEC. PERRY: We have -- when we deploy forces to Haiti, when we deploy forces to the Mideast, we do it in a way in which we de- conflict is the wonderful military term that's used; that is, we reserve forces that would be available for Korea. And we still have very substantial forces that could go to Korea if necessary. Where we would get into a conflict problem is if they both happened simultaneously and they both drew, therefore, on our airlift resources immediately. As long as our airlift can take care of the deployment of one mission and then regroup and be available to take care of another, we have adequate resources to deal with another conflict.

MR. MCINTYRE: Defense Secretary William Perry, thank you very much for being with us this morning.